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AUTHOR Williams, Dennis
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ABSTRACT

A community college reading/study skills course was designed to progressively introduce the student to the logical elements involved in symbolic processing and to facilitate understanding of the nature of the processes, as well as of impediments to them and of methods that will facilitate maximum efficiency in dealing with written material. The course, intended to assist community college students with limited reading and writing abilities to compete in a regular degree program, contains exercises in synthesizing reading, lecture, discussion, and individual experience by means of written response to questions, as well as objective tests and quizzes that require attention to detail, thoughtful analysis, and employment of logical concepts. Results of posttesting and follow-up studies on students who have completed the course showed the course to have succeeded with 252 college-age adults representing a wide range of skill levels and a variety of ethnic backgrounds. (Author/DF)

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Dennis Williams
257 Regents Blvd.
Fircrest, WA 98466

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UNHANDICAPPING THE ADULT:

A Reading/Study Skills Course for Community College Students

For the past several years I have been experimenting with a design for a reading/study skills course which will enable community college students with limited reading and writing abilities to successfully compete in a regular degree program. Limitations of time (2 hours per day for 5 weeks) and funding (approximately $1000 per 5 week term) have made experiment a necessity. Results of post-testing and follow-up study on students who have completed the course show it to be successful with college age adults representing a wide range of skill levels (reading levels of 3.5 to 13.0--average pre-course reading level: 7.4) and a variety of ethnic backgrounds (minority students make up approximately 46% of classes--this percentage includes 49% black, 38% Hispanic, 13% Samoan, Asian, and American Indian). At this time some 252 students (13 classes with an average of 19.38 students per class) have taken the course.

CS 004 747

COURSE DESIGN & RATIONALE

As previously mentioned, limitations of time and funding have presented great challenges. However, the nature of the student population has presented even greater ones. Many of the students who enroll in the course are veterans of special reading programs--they have been exposed to every conceivable type of programmed reading technique. The product of this kind of education is a student who is adept at selecting objective detail, filling in blanks and checking boxes, but who cannot retain read material or deal with it in a subjective manner. In other words, the majority of these students do not comprehend written material sufficiently to use it in academic or life situations. Age is another factor. Most are between the ages of 20 and 30 years--they are, in all respects, intellectually mature. As a result, techniques or material which fail to recognize or in any way insult this maturity will be met with resistence.

It has been necessary, then, to design a course which concentrates on practical relationships between written material and ordinary human endeavors, while, at the same time, provides sufficient intellectual content to stimulate college level thinking. These criteria are both met in a course which explores the relationship between reading and writing--approaching the decoding process by means of the encoding

process. Since encoding requires a complexity of thought, planning, and physical activity which is somewhat greater than that of decoding (Myklebust, 1965; Geschwind, 1972), personal involvement in the process of writing is necessarily higher than it is in reading.

THE COURSE

The course is designed to progressively introduce the student to the logical elements involved in symbolic processing; providing him with the building material necessary to understand the nature of those processes, impediments to processing, and methods which will facilitate maximum efficiency in dealing with written material. Exercises concentrate on synthesizing reading, lecture, discussion, and individual experience by means of written (sentence or paragraph) response to questions; however, objective tests and quizzes which require attention to detail, thoughtful analysis, and the employment of logical concepts are also used. (See Appendix for suggested exercises)

The content of the course provides the student with an inter-disciplinary view of reading and study, forcing attention from the narrow confines of his "problem" to the greater issues involved. Writing then requires him to gather new information and relate it to what he already knows (past experience)--the result is a new block of knowledge with which to approach the next class, the next reading.

This expanding and contracting of focus continues throughout the course, encouraging the student to begin to see his own difficulty as less a focus for embarrassment and more a focus for study. His work is given an importance and dignity that a conventional "remedial" course lacks. To further foster this sense of dignity, student responsibility is stressed. (See Appendix--Student Self-Examination)

The course is divided into fourteen distinct units, each of which may be identified by its subject matter. As shall be seen, units are open-ended enough to allow the inclusion of new information. The result is a course which maintains its currency--keeping student interest and instructor enthusiasm at a high level.

COURSE OUTLINE

I. Introduction to Symbolic Logic (The Formal System)

A. Introduction of the alphabet--explanation of grapheme/phoneme relationships.

B. History of writing (after Gelb)--general information on the invention of writing; advantages of a phonetic system over a pictographic system; development of the English alphabet.

C. The abstract and the concrete--demonstration and explanation of the two concepts.

1. Speech as an auditory abstraction of object; writing as a

graphic abstraction of speech.

2. Attention is drawn to the fact that writing is twice removed from concrete reality; problems that presents to the reader in terms of distancing him from the world of objects and actions.

D. Language development and learning--acceleration of human learning by freeing the learner from the relative inflexibility of the concrete world and the difficulty of manipulating concrete objects.

II. Communication

A. Relationship between speaker and listener.

1. The unique qualities of human speech.

a. "Synchrony Demonstrated between Movements of the Neonate and Adult Speech"--the studies of Condon and Sander.

b. Rhythmic responses of the listener--the studies of Martin.

2. The advantage of non-verbal cues to the conveyer of the message.

B. Relationship between writer and reader.

1. Disadvantages of lack of response to message.

2. Anticipation of questions and the use of verbal illustration to explain abstract concepts.

3. The unwritten contract--use of formal convention (symbol, phrase, sentence, and paragraph) to convey information.

4. Necessity of attention to linguistic detail on the part of both writer and reader--spacing and punctuation as rhythmic cues.

III. Criteria for Reading (See Appendix)

A. Developmental continuum of symbolic language--the work of Myklebust.

1. Comparisons drawn between initial introduction to symbolic logic and the eight conditions (criteria).

B. Explanation of taking dictation in terms of rough task analysis: hear sounds; recognition of sounds as words; analysis of words into appropriate phonemic elements; pairing of phonemic elements with graphic equivalents; determination of movements necessary to produce graphic symbols; production of symbols.

IV. Biological Logic (The Human System)

A. The senses--passageways for data.

1. Explanation of approaching a reading task by means of "multiple sensory modalities"--seeing the symbols; translation of visual symbols to sound; left to right processing, subvocalizing (tactile sense--kinesthetic).

a. Increasing quantity of data by consciously engaging several senses.

b. Use of vocalization and touch to slow visual scan to insure reception of detail.

B. Internal processing.

1. Specific reading/speech mechanisms (See Appendix).

2. The function of attention/ the problem of interference.

a. The importance of maintaining clear links between steps in the physical process.

3. The logic of the individual--neurological makeup as unique as facial features or fingerprints.

V. Psychological Logic

A. Communication between the symbolic and biological systems.

1. Motivation.

a. Reading as a process to reduce uncertainty (Eleanor Gibson).

b. Knowing what you want to get from study, and being interested in getting it--Staton's How to Study.

2. The function of short-term memory.

a. Capacity--7 ± 2 bits of information (Miller).

b. Linguistic structure as a means of increasing the capacity of STM.

1. phrase grouping (consolidation of individual elements)

2. function of redundancy (familiarity of word and phrase units)

3. function of meaning (conveyance of deep through surface structures).

3. Set--facilitating processing by setting attention to apprehend appropriate information.

4. Interference.

a. Biological--illness, extremes of temperature, etc.

b. Psychological--fear, confusion, etc.

c. Preconception--misreading by making inappropriate decisions about the meaning of material.

5. Boredom (as a function of lack of comprehension).

   a. confusion--similarities to sensory deprivation phenomena (Studies at McGill University).

   b. failure to recognize relationships of subject to personal short or long range goals.

      1. review and reevaluation of goals

      2. reevaluation of subject in relation to past, present, or potential experience.

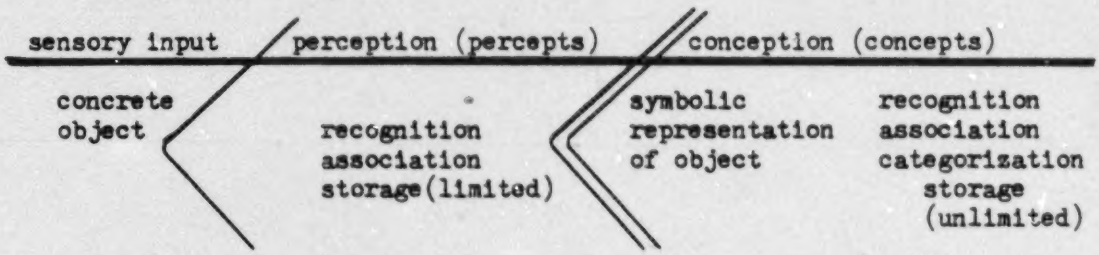
VI. Information Processing

A. Computer--sufficient information necessary (relevant detail) before any conclusion may be reached.

B. Human processing.

1. The human processor, with his great store of experience, tends to fill in gaps in information input; when the gaps are too great, allowing too much leaway in the fabrication of information, the probability of error increases greatly.

2. Model (after Bannatyne);



   a. percepts are directly connected to concrete sensory data;

   b. concepts may be divorced from percepts and from sensation.

c. Thought may be seen as a manipulation of concepts (symbolic representations of concrete realities) in terms of time and space.

d. Language exists to facilitate and communicate thought (written language as a visual display of the processes).

VII. Logic

A. A graphic representation of the natural processes of human thought.

1. Deductive (demonstrated until the concept is clear):

a. moves from the general to the specific

b. the necessity of clearly expressed premises

c. positive aspects--the logic of early learning (generalization)

d. negative aspects--the logic of prejudice, preconception

2. Error

a. necessity for learning

b. types

1. structural--improperly constructed specific premise

2. informational--incorrect information formulated in general premise

3. interference--incorrect conclusion; the result of preconception or prejudice, fear and anger (introduction of propaganda techniques).

3. Inductive (demonstrated until the concept is clear):

a. from the specific to the general (relatively more complex)

b. the logic of science, medicine, social science, criminology, etc.

4. Cause/Effect

   a. a logic of everyday experience

   b. a sequence of events made remarkable by some significant event--similar to topic sentence of paragraph, main point of communication

   c. the logic of the courtroom; particularly useful in showing negligence

   d. a chain constructed after the fact--possibilities for fabricated links.

VIII. The Paragraph

A. Generalization--similar to deductive structure; topic sentence as a general premise.

B. Discrimination--exploration; detailed information; support for topic sentence.

C. The Paragraph (Thomas Klise films)--examination of its logic and logical structure.

D. The essay examination--requirement for logical paragraph construction.

IX. Tests

A. Objective and Essay (subjective).

B. What tests test:

1. Initial preparation--prior study (reading and note taking).

2. Ability to read carefully.

3. Ability to recall information on cue.

4. Ability to write.
5. Ability to take tests:
   a. motivation
   b. concentration
   c. ability to deal with stress
   d. stamina
6. Problems in any one of these areas can cause failure.

(MID-TERM EXAMINATION--marked to indicate relative time given to each unit)

X. Statistics

A. Measures of central tendency incorporated into mid-term exam review.

B. How statistics may be used to support argument--the authority of numbers.

C. How writers take advantage of our sense of the authority of numbers--what to watch for.

XI. Gathering Information

1. Library Orientation.
2. Research tools--Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Card Catalog, Facts on File, Book Review Digest, Books in Print, Encyclopedias, Reference Librarian.
3. Other sources--past experience, mass media.
4. Relationship to Staton's Preview step to research tools.

XII. Memory

A. The collection, organization, storage, and retrieval of information.

B. Information Processing (Psychology Today video tape).

C. Review of human processing model.

D. Passive vs Active remembering.

E. Penfield's experiments--evidence for specific brain mechanisms.

XIII. The Writing Process

A. Myklebust's "Hierarchy of the Development of Symbolic Language."

B. Geschwind's "...Acute Confusional States."

C. "Steps to Better Writing," Thomas Klise film series--stresses logical step-by-step approach to a writing task.

D. Relationship of writing to reading--a review.

XIV. PQRST & Klise Techniques (Practice)

A. PQRST Outline and Checklist (see Appendix).

B. Organization as it affects reading, writing, remembering.

COURSE GRADING AND EVALUATION

Since the course is underwritten by the college (Fort Steilacoom Community College), and may be taken for college or highschool credit, standard letter grades are granted at its completion. Grades are

determined by a cumulative point system based soley on work completed. To make such a system equitable, final grading is not dependent on class curve; rather, the curve is established at mid-term, then frozen. At final grading, numerical grade divisions along the curve are multiplied by a factor derived by dividing points gained by the top student at final tally into the highest individual mid-term point score (to encourage more capable students to continue hard work after mid-term, this factor is limited to 2.0). At mid-term, then, every student knows exactly what will be necessary to pass the course. Extra credit work is encouraged, and it is not unusual to have a student who is failing at mid-term increase his final standing to a "B" or an "A." An additional benefit of this system is that final grading is biased in favor of the low pass student--it is easier to double a mid-term score of 70 points than one of 150 points.

In addition to grading, students are informed of improvements and weaknesses in reading, listening, basic writing skills, class participation, effective note taking, and motivation; additional course work is suggested, along with opportunities for informal practice in reading, listening, conversation, and writing.

RESULTS

The effectiveness of the course has been measured in two ways: by pre and post-testing, and by follow-up study on the first 97 students. The Monroe-Sherman (Intermediate Form) Speed of Reading subtest is

administered at the beginning and at the end of the course. This subtest, though in many ways limited, has the advantage of group administration, brief administration time, and rapid scoring. It also bears similarities to examinations--requiring specific written responses to a series of instructions. Individual score increases of 3 or 4 grade levels are not uncommon--average increase: 2.65 grade levels. To account for the possiblity of increases resulting from test familiarity, a control group of Freshman English Composition students was similarly tested. During the course of five weeks these students received instruction in writing and critical reading. Results comparing test performances of the control group with those of an average reading/study skills class may be seen in the following table:

	Reading/Study Skills Class (23 students tested)	Freshman English Composition Class (14 students tested)
av. pre-course scores:	8.0	9.96
av. post-course scores:	10.15	10.49
average increase:	2.15	.53

It might be reasonably argued that differences in performance increases may be due, in part, to some built in ceiling factor in the task itself--it is possible that the ability of the average adult to process written instruction and respond in writing levels off as it approaches the 10.50 level. This might account for the smaller increase in the performance of the control group. It is significant to note, however, that that group's five lowest

pretest performances (averaging 8.18) averaged an increase of only .46 grade levels; whereas, the five highest pretest performances of the reading/study skills group (averaging 10.40) saw an average increase of 1.96.

Additional post-testing of oral reading and writing abilities--using the Gray Oral Reading Test and Myklebust's Picture Story Language Test--has been done on a limited basis. Results of this testing show reading/study skills students to have 60% better comprehension of orally read material than do control group students (though they make more mistakes in their reading); 61% greater average number of words in their writing samples, and similar Syntax Quotients (though both groups scored in the 23rd percentile on this measure). Although neither group showed marked difference in the imaginative quality of their writings, the reading/study skills group tended to include more objective detail. This is probably a function of the emphasis given to objective analysis during the course of instruction.

Follow-up study indicates increases in students' ability to follow written instruction, ability to follow verbal instruction, ability to express ideas in writing, willingness to ask questions regarding assignments or concepts presented in lecture or text, completion of assigned work, contribution to classroom discussion, ability to take advantage of out-of-class resources, and willingness to take advantage of extra credit opportunities--overall rating of students: above average.

CONCLUSIONS

Though increases in reading and study performance may be partially attributed to task familiarity, it is important to remember that these students entered the course with considerable educational background--most of it unusable. The course, with its multi-disciplined approach to academics and its concentration on writing, seems to have allowed them to synthesize and utilize much of that background.

Regardless of its successes, however, the course is not a panacea--it will not cure the effects of twelve years of educational insult or neglect. What it will do, though, is provide the student with some insight into his problems and set him in the direction of recovery. Many of these students leave the course to pursue new-found interests in psychology, philosophy, and communications--a few, God help them, want to do work in special education.

APPENDIX

List of Contents

1. Texts and Audio-Visual Aids
2. Suggested Exercises
3. Extra Credit Possiblities
4. Vocabulary Builder
5. Criteria for Reading
6. Student Self-Examination
7. Reading Outline
8. PQRST Outline & Checklist
9. Diagram--Mechanics of Graphic-Phonetic Translation
10. References

Text Books

Staton, Thomas. How to Study, sixth edition. 1977.
(P.O. Box 6133, Montgomery, Alabama 36106)

In addition, a reading text is recommended to allow commonality of of assignment. I use Holt, Rinehart & Winston's, Developing Reading Versatility.

Film Strips

"All about Paragraphs;" "Paragraphs that Work," and "Steps to Better Writing." Thomas Klise Co., P.O. Box 3418, Peoria, Ill. 61614.
These seven film strips--two on the paragraph and five on writing--cannot be praised highly enough. They are by far the best tools I've seen for teaching the basics of writing.

Video Tape

"Information Processing." Psychology Today (VIC 8-3). 1977.
(available from: Primary Communication, Inc., 135 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Southern Pines, NC 28387)

SUGGESTED EXERCISES

The following exercises are recommended in addition to examinations and quizzes. Except for the essay question on self-assessment and vocabulary exercises, all assignments are completed in the classroom. Exercises are arranged to correspond with the course outline.

1. Alphabet exercises (ungraded)--include sequencing and execution of alphabet under timed conditions (30 sec.). Do not assume that an adult knows all the letters--I have had classes where 20% could not correctly write the alphabet.

2. Written instructions requiring the construction or completion of geometric forms. (1 point for each correctly accomplished step)

3. Dictation/Correction and Copying. Relatively difficult passages should be given orally. I use the eight criteria necessary for reading (included in Appendix). Work should be collected and returned with correction sheet the following day. Dictation work is scored on the basis of uncorrected errors. After corrections are completed, students should copy statements on the correction sheet verbatim. Copy work is scored on the basis of errors. To emphasize the necessity for attention to detail, these exercises should be scored very strictly.

4. Vocabulary--see exercise included in Appendix. (extra credit)

5. Essay type examination (essay questions are included in all tests). Questions should be designed to focus students' attention on general problems and concepts, and emphasis placed on content rather than mechanics. I find the following questions valuable in this regard:

   a. Explain the concept of approaching a reading task using multiple sensory modalities.

   b. Given the information presented in the first few days of class, what do you think presents the greatest obstacle to your own effective reading? (Students do this out of class; the work requires careful thought and considerable writing.)

   c. Choose one of the following statements and discuss it. State your main point clearly and support it with reasons, facts, examples,and causes.

      1. Most poor readers have problems because they do not care whether or not they read well.

      2. Most poor readers have never been taught to read effectively.

      3. Most poor readers cannot be taught to read well.

   d. Explain how the PQRST process would help you prepare yourself for a job interview. How would this method increase your chances of getting a job.

6. Written Summaries of read material.

7. Reading Outline (included in Appendix). I use this outline toward the end of the term. Three or four of the longer nonfiction articles in Developing Reading Versatility are selected; each given on a different day (30 min. time limit).

I have found that 12-15 graded exercises, if they are well chosen, provide the student with ample experience.* To assure rapid feed-back, all exercises (including major examinations) are graded and returned the next day. On return, each is reviewed and discussed in terms of theoretical and practical rationale.

* If more assignments are given, there is a tendency for the work of both student and instructor to deteriorate in quality. It must be remembered that these exercises, along with extra credit work, constitute a massive work-load for the instructor--approximately 400 graded items in a 5 week period.

EXTRA CREDIT POSSIBILITIES

1. Discuss the relationship between classroom attendance and academic success.

2. Attention is a critical factor in learning. What does the word attention mean? How does it affect your ability to gather in sufficient information to make informed decisions? How does it help in remembering (or recalling) information? (Discuss one or all of these questions)

3. What is the difference between the acts of reading words on a page and understanding symbolically encoded ideas? Explain what situations, conditions, or events might interfere with your understanding of symbolically encoded ideas?

4. Children seem to grow fastest intellectually between the ages of two and six years. Explain how language may affect that rapid growth.

5. Cycle of Failure is a term used to describe a process which results when fear of failure creates so much stress that a person cannot perform well enough to succeed; the resulting failure, of course, sets up even more fear and reinforces the notion that success is impossible. Give an example of this cycle in action (either from a real-life or fictional situation).

6. Self-victimization is common in students who continually fail. Self-victimization involves setting up a situation which will guarantee failure --i.e., habitual absence from class, failure to do assigned work, etc. Give an example of this process and explain how it works. Why do you think a student might do this? Is it possible that some students are afraid to do well? Why?

7. Memory is a fascinating human faculty. The ability to remember involves at least three separate (but not separable) phases: (1) the ability to attend to and collect data, (2) the ability to retain collected data long enough to analyse it for possible significance, and (3) the ability to organize and store data in a manner which allows recall. Given these three phases, which one do you think most often accounts for memory problems in otherwise normal individuals? Which do you think the student has the greatest control over? How does motivation enter into memory? How would Staton's PQRST method help a student remember?

8. According to Staton, motivation is knowing what you want to get out of your study, and being interested in getting it. With this in mind, would it be a good idea for a student to clearly express his goals in writing? Besides a clearly expressed long range objective, what else should a student include when writing goals? Is frequent reevaluation of goals a wise idea? Why/why not? Do you believe most students understand the value of their study? Explain fully. Explain how the Question step of the PQRST system can increase motivation.

VOCABULARY BUILDER

The following exercise is designed to fortify your vocabulary, as well as strengthen spelling, writing, and reading skills.

The first step is to select a word from your reading or writing--it would be best to select one which you have misspelled, or one which you find yourself looking up frequently in the dictionary. This word should be written down and labled, "target word." Once the word is found, look it up in a dictionary, then proceed as follows:

1. pronounce it aloud
2. spell it aloud
3. write it again, dividing it at the syllable breaks indicated
4. pronounce each syllable separately
5. pronounce it as a whole word
6. read the definition aloud, then copy it in writing
7. construct a sentence using the word.

After you have finished with the "target word," do the same with the word which immediately precedes it in the dictionary, and after that do the same with the word which immediately follows the "target word." Write down any similarities you see in the definitions of the three words.

EXAMPLE:

Target Word: circle
(spoken: circle; c-i-r-c-l-e)
cir-cle
(spoken: cir-cle; circle)
(spoken: a ring, halo; a closed plane curve every point equidistant from a fixed point within the curve.)
write: same as spoken above

Sentence: They formed a circle with the wagons.

Preceding Target Word: circinate (proceed as with target word)

Following Target Word: circlet (proceed as with target word)

Conclude by pointing to the fact that all three words deal with the concept of enclosing space within curved lines. You may even wish to include a drawing to illustrate the idea expressed in the definitions of the words.

If you select one word each day, at the end of a month you will have increased your vocabulary by 90 words. You will also find that you will be able to figure out the meanings of many other unfamiliar words by the similarities they bear to words you already know. In addition, you will begin to recognize some of the logical patterns involved in spelling and in word usage.

CRITERIA FOR READING

1. The child must know the language he expects to read.
2. He must dissect spoken words into component sounds in their temporal order.
3. He must recognize and discriminate the letters of the alphabet in their various forms.
4. He must respond to the direction by which words are spelled and put in order in continuous text.
5. He must respond to the patterns of highly probable correspondence between letters and sounds.
6. He must recognize printed words from whatever cues he can use.
7. The child must learn that printed words signal spoken words and that they have meanings analogous to those of spoken words.
8. The child must learn to reason and to think about what he reads, within the limits of his talents and experience.

(from, Reading Disorders in the United States, 1969)

STUDENT SELF-EXAMINATION

The major difference between college and other levels of education lies in the responsibilities placed upon the student. The following questions are designed to remind you of those responsibilities. They will also help you determine the intensity of your commitment to those responsibilities. Answer the questions honestly, then write a summary, not a confession, of your evaluation (one or two paragraphs).

Rating: 1-always; 2-usually; 3-sometimes; 4-rarely; 5-never thought of it

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Do I--	Circle One
1. pay attention to the instructor?	1 2 3 4 5
2. pay attention to the statements and questions of my fellow students?	1 2 3 4 5
3. make my opinions known during classroom discussion?	1 2 3 4 5
4. ask questions when I am confused?	1 2 3 4 5
5. read all assignments?	1 2 3 4 5
6. complete written assignments in time to meet due dates?	1 2 3 4 5
7. take advantage of instructor's office hours for discussion of troublesome points or concepts?	1 2 3 4 5
8. follow-up on suggestions for improvement?	1 2 3 4 5
9. take advantage of extra-credit opportunities?	1 2 3 4 5
10. take advantage of outside sources of information--newspapers, magazines, television, libraries?	1 2 3 4 5
11. look for relationships between this course and other courses I am taking (have taken)?	1 2 3 4 5
12. look for ways in which to use the knowledge I have gained in this course?	1 2 3 4 5

Keep this evaluation as a reminder of your particular weak points. Turn in your summary when completed.

READING OUTLINE

Answer all of the following questions. Where your answer calls for more than a single word or phrase, construct complete sentences.

1. What is the name of the article?_____
2. Who is the author?_____
3. When was the article written?_____
4. If the article is more than three years old, is the material it contains still pertinent?_____ Explain why/why not:_____
   _____
   _____
5. List the table of contents or subtitles. (use this space if more room is needed)
   1._____
   2._____
   3._____
   4._____
   5._____
   6._____
   7._____
6. Approximately how many words does the article contain? _____
7. How long would it take you to read this article?_____
8. What is the subject of the article?_____
9. Who is the author's intended audience?_____
10. What purpose does he have for writing the article?_____
    _____
11. What role does he assume to best accomplish his purpose?_____
12. In your opinion, is his role appropriate?_____Why/why not?_____
    _____
    _____
13. What is the article's main point? (Write down the sentence in the article which best explains the main point)_____
    _____
14. State the main point in your own words_____
    _____
15. Do you agree or disagree with the author's opinions and conclusions?_____
    Explain your answer._____
    _____
    _____

PQRST OUTLINE & CHECKLIST

Preview

Title:
Author's name:
Date of publication (or approximate date of writing):
Table of Contents (book) or Subtitles (chapter or article):
Index (or other indication of subjects the material will contain):
Bibliography (or suggested reading list):
Preface:
Introduction & Summary Chapters (for chapters or article, check first and last paragraphs):
Number of pages (a gauge of approximate reading time):

Question

General:
What is the subject?
Who is the audience?
What is the author's purpose?
What role has the author assumed to accomplish his/her purpose?
What is the main point of the author's communication?

Specific:
How will knowing this help me now? in the future?
Other questions pertinent to the subject and purpose of the communication?

Read

Read through the article (chapter, book) with an eye to answering questions. Questions should be reformulated as necessary. New questions should be noted in the margin of the text, or on a piece of paper. If few of your questions were dealt with in the communication, then you probably need to do a better job on the preview step.

State

A brief summary of the article (chapter, book) incorporating the major points. (This should be written)

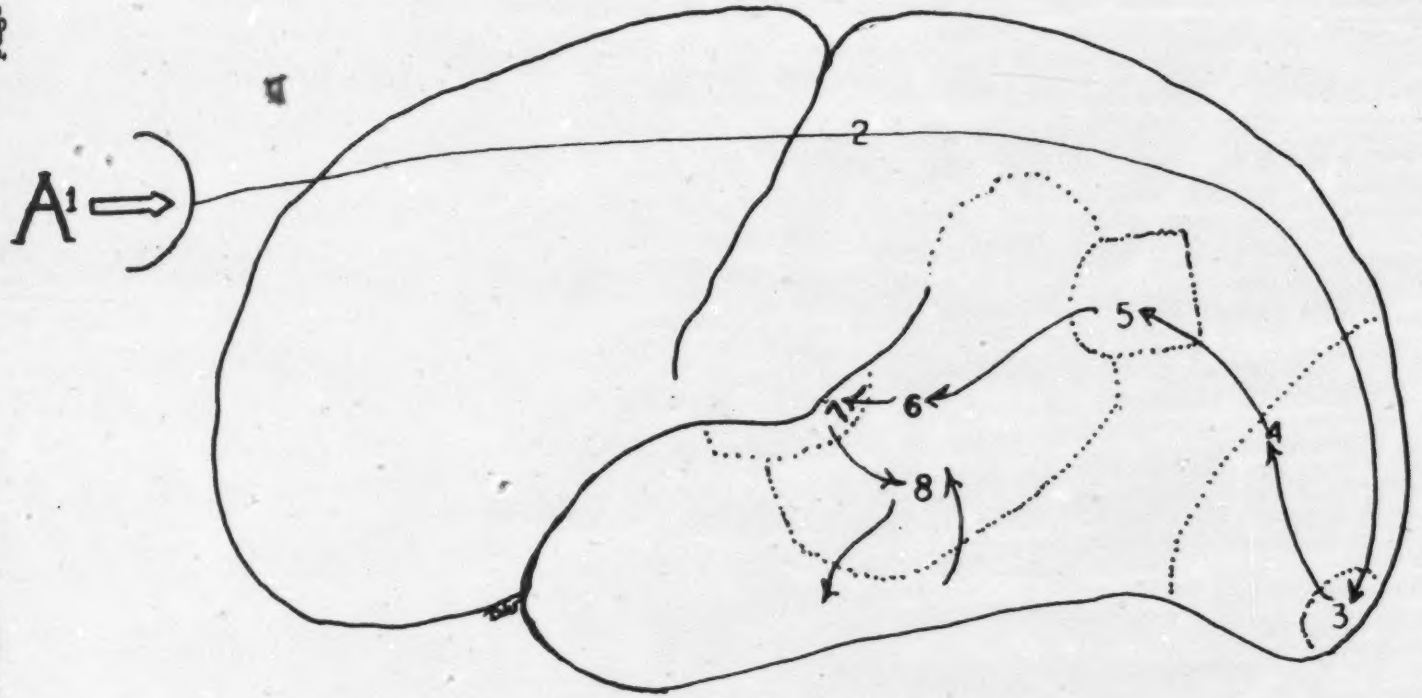
Test

In light of the author's purpose and the points stressed in the writing (usually seen in the subtitles or topic sentences), what questions do you think might be asked of the material to test your knowledge? Formulate three test questions in writing and answer them.

Suggested by Staton's How to Study & Klise's "Steps to Better Writing."

THE MECHANICS OF GRAPHIC-PHONETIC TRANSLATION

(A much-simplified diagram showing the probable routing necessary to translate visual symbols to sound.)



1. Visual stimulus
   *
2. Transmission of stimulus along optic nerve
   *
3. Impulse reaches primary visual area (perceived as light & shadow; little definition of form)
   *
4. Reaches secondary visual area (form is defined, but not recognized)
   *
5. Reaches angular gyrus--routed for appropriate processing as symbol
   *
6. Wernicke's area--recognition as letter (graphic symbol)
   *
7. Auditory area--graphic symbol translated to phonetic equivalent (sound)
   *
8. Wernicke's area--processing of sound for recognition and understanding (probably through associations in Temporal Lobe)

* Indicates Attention

Though this routing is not anatomically accurate, the diagram serves to illustrate the complexity of the mechanical process, as well as the critical role played by attention.

(after the work of Penfield, 1959; Geschwind,1964)

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